

10/031317
531 Rec'd PCT/P 16 JAN 2002
[52433/675]

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of TAKEUCHI, et al.
Serial No. Not Yet Assigned
Filing Date Herewith
Title CERAMIC PLATE FOR SIDE WEIR OF TWIN DRUM TYPE
CONTINUOUS CASTING APPARATUS

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Please amend the above-identified application as follows:

In the title:

-(Amended) CERAMIC PLATE FOR SIDE WEIR OF TWIN DRUM TYPE
CONTINUOUS CASTING APPARATUS -

In the Claims:

Please amend the following claims as follows:

3. (Amended) A ceramic plate material for the side dams of a twin-drum strip caster according to claim 1, characterized by consisting of, in terms of mass%, BN of not less than 5% to not more than 20%, AlN of more than 15% to not more than 40% and Si₃N₄ of not less than 40% to not more than 80%.
5. (Amended) A ceramic plate material for the side dams of a twin-drum strip caster according to claim 4, characterized by further containing, in terms of mass%, one or more of: Al₂O₃ of not less than 1% to not more than 15%, MgO of not less than 1% to not more than 15%, ZrO₂ of not less than 1% to not more than 30% and Y₂O₃ of not less than 1% to not more than 15%.

REMARKS

This Amendment is being submitted in order to eliminate multiple dependent claims.

It is respectfully submitted that the subject matter of the present application is new, non-obvious, and useful. Prompt consideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the title and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "Versions with markings to show changes made."

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: JAN. 16, 2002

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

The title has been amended as follows:

-- CERAMIC PLATE [MATERIAL] FOR SIDE [DAM] WEIR OF TWIN[-]DRUM [STRIP CASTER] TYPE CONTINUOUS CASTING APPARATUS --

The claims have been amended as follows:

3. A ceramic plate material for the side dams of a twin-drum strip caster according to claim 1 [or 2], characterized by consisting of, in terms of mass%, BN of not less than 5% to not more than 20%, AlN of more than 15% to not more than 40% and Si_3N_4 of not less than 40% to not more than 80%.
5. A ceramic plate material for the side dams of a twin-drum strip caster according to claim [3 or 4], characterized by further containing, in terms of mass%, one or more of: Al_2O_3 of not less than 1% to not more than 15%, MgO of not less than 1% to not more than 15%, ZrO_2 of not less than 1% to not more than 30% and Y_2O_3 of not less than 1% to not more than 15%.